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October 4, 2001

THIRTEEN INDICTED IN ECSTASY DISTRIBUTION CONSPIRACY

_____ TAMPA - An indictment was announced in Tampa today which charges thirteen individuals with conspiracy to distribute "ecstasy" or MDMA, as well as various counts of distribution of "ecstasy" or MDMA. Charged in the indictment announced today are:

Ryan Robert Mace, 26, of Tampa;
Robert Amos Bassett, 25, of Safety Harbor;
Ryan Robert Chapin, 23, of Tampa;
Louis Fernandez, III, 30, of Tampa;
Michelle Lynn Fernandez, 32, of Tampa;
Thomas Wilbur Seaborn, 28, of Pinellas Park;
Earvin Williamson, 32, of Tampa;
Timothy McColm, 27, of Tampa;
Joseph Edward Whyte, 30, of Zephyrhills;
Freddy Colon, Jr., 23, of Tampa;
Timothy James Tatarow, 26, of Palm Harbor;
Christopher Grant, 28, of Hudson; and
David William Guice, 22, of Sarasota.

Each defendant faces a maximum term of imprisonment of twenty years, up to a

one million dollar fine, and a term of supervised release of at least three years if convicted.

The indictment was announced by Mac Cauley, United States Attorney for the Middle District of Florida. The investigation was conducted by the United States Drug Enforcement Administration and the Tampa Police Department, with the assistance of the United States Customs Service, Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, Florida Department of Law Enforcement and Sarasota Police Department. Mr. Cauley praised the various agencies for their cooperation.

Assistant United States Attorney Jeffrey S. Downing of the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force will prosecute the case.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of the federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty.